

January 15, 2016

FOR YOUR INFORMATION MEMO

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Harry Black, City Manager *HB*

Subject: **Class A Land Application Facilities at Little Miami and Muddy Creek Treatment Plants**

The Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) recently completed a feasibility study to explore alternatives to the incinerator at the Little Miami Treatment Plant, which requires significant upgrades to comply with new federal air emissions standards taking effect March 21, 2016.

Preferred Remedy

After a detailed review of options, the Administration has determined a preferred course of action. Specifically, the Administration recommends pursuing a "Class A Land Application" alternative. This option converts treated sludge into a material that can be safely applied to farm land in place of conventional fertilizer. Additionally, the anaerobic digestion process will produce biogas, which can be used to produce electricity and compressed natural gas. This alternative energy will be used by the treatment plant.

In addition to the significant environmental benefits, the cost of the Class A Land Application option is significantly lower in cost than alternative remedies. The estimated 25-year life cycle cost of the Class A Land Application alternative is \$65M, versus \$121M to build a new incinerator.

The Administration recommends the Class A Land Application alternative for the Muddy Creek Treatment Plant as well, which eliminates the need to haul sludge by truck, several times a day, from the west side of the city to the Little Miami Treatment Plant on the east side.

Next Steps

Assuming the County authorizes the necessary funding, MSD will solicit Requests for Proposals to construct processing facilities adjacent to the Little Miami and Muddy Creek treatment plants. The chosen contractor will be responsible for processing the treated sludge and implementing the land application component. In return, MSD will pay a "tipping" fee on a weight or volume basis.

The City and County have been working in collaboration on this issue and are presently in discussions with the USEPA. Soon a year-long extension will be requested to allow the current incinerator to keep operating until March 2017. If granted, the current incinerator will remain operational while the City completes the competitive proposals process, and MSD will avoid hauling waste to a landfill in the meantime. Once the contract is awarded, the City will require the chosen contractor to dispose of MSD's sludge at a processing facility until the new processing facility is complete.

Community buy-in is a critically important aspect of this project. As such, MSD will soon host meetings with the community to provide information and obtain feedback on the preferred alternative.

Given the impending USEPA requirements, identifying and pursuing an alternative to hauling tons of waste product throughout the City on a daily basis is a priority. A thorough analysis has presented a course of action that is good for the environment, cheaper, and avoids a significant nuisance for city neighborhoods.

This memo is for information only; no action is required.

cc: Gerald Checco, Director of Sewers